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SUBJECT: BELGIAN MFA MORE REALISTIC THAN OPTIMISTIC ON
RWANDA DRC GOMA MEETING

REF: KINSHASA 1081

Classified By: Deputy Political Economic Counselor Robert Kiene for Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) According to MFA Congo Desk Officer Koen Adam, the Belgian government took note of the Rwanda - DRC statements from the December 4-5 Goma meeting. The GOB recognized several positive statements, and appreciated the goals to which the two countries committed. Belgium is realistic, however, and recalls that previous statements have not led to positive results. He added that if the two countries move forward on their new agenda, the Belgians would be supportive, as would the French. The next step would be to determine how the international community could facilitate the rapprochement. Adam suggested this would be an appropriate agenda item for the next working group meeting.

¶2. (C) Adam listed three of the Goma meeting takeaways as noteworthy, and offered commentary on each (the FDLR plan, restoration of diplomatic relations, and Congolese participation in the Economic Community of Great Lake Countries (CPGL)). He mentioned the GOB had attempted to reinvigorate the CPGL for some time to no avail. The FDLR commitment was noteworthy because the DRC recognized the FDLR as a problem for the first time. Adam expressed skepticism that cooperation against the FDLR is realistic, as it includes Rwandan forces and possibly intelligence on DRC territory; without a neutral force (such as MONUC) the two "allies" could easily end up fighting each other. If the goal of improving diplomatic relations is a true commitment, the international community should confirm this willingness and promote it. He summed up by commenting that Belgium remembered many failed promises, but now it looked as though Rwanda and the DRC may be working together constructively.

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